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Alabama DYSLEXIA RESOURCE GUIDE

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ARI Alabama Reading Initiative

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Section 1

Introduction

Dyslexia is defined by the Alabama Literacy Act as a specific learning challenge or disability that is neurological in origin and characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities.

The purpose of the *Alabama Dyslexia Resource Guide* is to inform and assist educators, administrators, and parents or guardians as they provide and monitor dyslexia-specific services and support for students in Alabama's public schools. The Alabama State Board of Education Dyslexia Resolution was unanimously adopted on April 8, 2015, and is linked in the Resources portion of this guide. The Dyslexia Resolution defined dyslexia, recognized the significant educational implications that may result for students with dyslexia, called for the creation of a Dyslexia Advisory Council, and called for the revision of the *Alabama Administrative Code* to acknowledge and address dyslexia and subsequent services needed to ensure the success of students with dyslexia. The Dyslexia Amendments to the *Alabama Administrative Code* were adopted by the State Board of Education on October 8, 2015, and are included in the Resources portion of this guide. Implementation of these amendments within a tiered, instructional framework should result in improved educational outcomes for all students.

The *Alabama Literacy Act #2019-523 (ALA)* was signed into law on June 10, 2019, and amended in April of 2022 *Act #2022-392.* This act mandates adherence to the Science of Reading along with a variety of intensive literacy supports for all students in grades K-3, including those students with dyslexia. This act additionally mandates that the State Superintendent will oversee implementation of the AAC Dyslexia Amendments. The *Alabama Literacy Act* is linked in the Resources portion of this guide.

The Alabama Literacy Act contains the following definition of dyslexia:

> Dyslexia is defined as a learning challenge or disability that is neurological in origin and characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the delivery of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.

Rationale for Alabama's Dyslexia Services Plan: Address dyslexia-related learning challenges or difficulties before the child develops a need for special education services.

Students with dyslexia often experience difficulties with reading, writing, and spelling that are unexpected in view of their other abilities. The Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) is utilized to ensure that these challenges are recognized and addressed. This occurs through dyslexia-specific interventions which enable students to develop reading, writing, and spelling skills needed to become college- and career-ready without the need for special education support. Without effective intervention, these initial learning challenges may instead develop into learning disabilities as the student's reading, writing, and spelling skills do not develop at the expected rate, and referral for Special Education evaluation may be needed.

The Alabama Literacy Act mandates that **all** struggling readers will receive dyslexia-specific reading intervention. (ALA, p 14)

Rationale for Dyslexia Screening Procedures:

The *Alabama Literacy Act #2019-523 and #2022-392* Section 3 (b) addresses requirements of universal screeners used by districts.

(b) Each approved assessment system shall do all of the following:

(1) Provide screening and diagnostic capabilities for monitoring student progress.

(2) Measure, at a minimum, phonological awareness, oral language, the alphabetic principle, including letter naming, letter sound, and sound letter correspondence, decoding, encoding, accuracy, vocabulary, and comprehension.

(3) ***Identify students who have a reading deficiency, including identifying students with characteristics of dyslexia.*** *(pg 5)*

Universal screeners that are tightly aligned to the components of foundational reading mandated by the ALA allow schools to assess skills which are considered red flags for characteristics of dyslexia. This allows districts to intervene quickly, as opposed to universal screeners that will require additional testing for missing components.

If students who failed universal screeners do not respond to dyslexia-specific intervention, additional assessments may be needed to determine the underlying cause of the student's limited response to intervention; and, at that point, the student may be found to need referral for a special education evaluation.

According to IDA, struggling readers may appear to "'fit the profile' of dyslexia;" however, reading problems may be caused by a lack of appropriate instruction rather than the child's ability to learn. Thus, caution should be exercised when identifying struggling readers as having characteristics of dyslexia before appropriate instruction has been provided. If learners respond quickly to intervention, the source of the reading difficulty may not be dyslexia. (IDA Dyslexia Handbook: What Every Family Should Know 2019).[14]

Section 2

Overview

Why do we need to provide struggling readers with dyslexia-specific intervention in grades K-3 through the Alabama Literacy Act and in subsequent grades through the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework in Alabama?

- Without appropriate dyslexia-specific interventions, the learning challenges encountered by struggling readers often emerge as profound learning disabilities that are resistant to remediation. **These students can be helped as early as kindergarten.**
- Even after students are identified with specific learning disabilities, the dyslexia that may be the underlying cause of their specific learning disability may not be recognized, and dyslexia-specific interventions may not be provided as a part of their specialized individual instruction. ALL students who display characteristics of dyslexia should receive dyslexia-specific intervention, regardless of their status as a general or special-education student.
- Early provision of high-quality instruction in foundational reading skills, along with appropriate interventions, will equip many struggling readers for success in school and in life, will preserve the students' self-esteem, and may eliminate their later need for special education services. [8, 10]
- Individuals who initially struggle with reading are usually very capable of acquiring greatly improved reading skills, but without early identification of the need for intervention, they are:
    - Much more likely to drop out of high school. [1,2,7]
    - Much more likely to be unemployed or underemployed. [11]
    - Much more likely to be disconnected from society. [11]
    - Much more likely to be incarcerated. More than half of all inmates in the United States are illiterate. [1, 2, 11]
- Early identification of the need for appropriate dyslexia-specific early intervention provided through general education in Alabama schools will:
    - Reduce the negative academic and social impacts of dyslexia. [4, 5]
    - Equip individuals with dyslexia to be literate, productive Alabama citizens realizing their full potential and contributing to the economic well-being of Alabama. [5, 10, 12]

Components of Alabama's Dyslexia Services Plan

- **Screening**
  - The Problem Solving Teams will analyze universal screening and progress-monitoring data to assist teachers in planning and implementing appropriate instruction and intervention aligned to the science of reading for all students with academic/and or behavioral difficulties, including those students who exhibit the characteristics of dyslexia.
  - **Although the process outlines dyslexia-specific intervention as the first step for struggling readers, *some students, based on the severity of their reading difficulty, may be simultaneously screened for characteristics of dyslexia* using screening instruments currently in place for use in public schools.**

- **Intervention**
  - **Students in grades K-3 will have a Student Reading Improvement Plan (SRIP)** developed by the school team that includes a parent or guardian, while **students in grades 4-12 will have a dyslexia services plan** developed by the Problem Solving Team (PST). Students who are promoted from grade 3 to grade 4 with a good cause exemption should continue with an SRIP as required in the ALA.
  - Results of dyslexia-specific reading interventions will be used by the Problem Solving Team (PST) to determine appropriate needs of students, including dyslexia screening. Dyslexia-specific interventions for students in grades K-3 must be selected from those approved by the Literacy Task Force in compliance with the ALA. Dyslexia specific interventions for students in grades 4-12 should be selected from the list included in the resource guide.
  - The school team or the PST will monitor the student's response to intervention and communicate at least monthly with the family regarding the progress being made by the student. *A student's lack of improvement with a dyslexia-specific reading intervention program should be documented, discussed with the family, and other interventions considered and/or used.*

- **Classroom Instruction**
  - With professional development and instructional coaching support, classroom teachers will utilize effective classroom strategies based upon Structured Literacy and the science of how students learn to read and have been shown to be effective for students with dyslexia.

- **Assistive Technology**
  - Students who meet the criteria for displaying characteristics of dyslexia and are reading considerably below grade-level may need to be provided with assistive technology to have access to academic content.
    - Examples of assistive technology - http://dyslexiahelp.umich.edu/tools/software-assistive-technology
    - Examples of tablet apps - http://dyslexiahelp.umich.edu/tools/apps

- **Accommodations**
  - Students who meet the criteria for displaying characteristics of dyslexia and are in need of classroom support may need to be provided with accommodations to "level the playing field" by providing equal and ready access to the task at hand.
  - Examples of accommodations often needed by students with dyslexia are included in the Section 6 of this Resource Guide.

- **Professional Learning**
  - The Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) will make available to Alabama public school educators a dyslexia certification training course accredited by the International Multisensory Structured Language Education Council (IMSLEC). This certification training course will equip educators to support other educators, to provide dyslexia-specific intervention, and to modify the dyslexia-specific intervention as needed by individual students. (2021 CALT Job Description)
  - Professional learning regarding dyslexia and implications for classroom teachers will be provided. This professional learning should target dyslexia awareness training, dyslexia screening, dyslexia-specific classroom strategies, academic accommodations, and the use of assistive technology.
  - The ALA added the following requirements:
    - *"Teacher preparation programs at public colleges and universities in the state shall offer dyslexia therapy teacher preparation courses that are approved by the International Multisensory Structured Language Education Council or the International Dyslexia Association. Multi-institutional consortia or affiliations to assure access to these courses is acceptable."* (p 29)
    - *"K-12 and Early Childhood teachers who have completed an International Multisensory Structured Language Education Council endorsed training course and have received a passing score on the Academic Language Therapy Association's Certified Academic Language Therapy assessment, or the International Dyslexia*

Association's Knowledge and Practice Examination of Effective Reading Instruction, and who hold a valid Professional Educator Certificate shall be eligible for a dyslexia therapist endorsement." (p 28) Click HERE for more information on the endorsement.

The Alabama Committee on Grade Level Reading added a list of professional learning opportunities to the *Action Plan for Literacy: Birth to K-12*. Please note only the trainings which are fully aligned to the IDA Knowledge and Practice Standards are recommended by the Dyslexia Advisory Council.
These trainings are: Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS) and Multisensory Structured Language Education (MSLE). MSLE trainings are accredited by the International Multisensory Structured Language Education Council (IMSLEC) as a dyslexia therapy training program.

NOTE: **The implementation of a Student Reading Improvement Plan or Dyslexia Services Plan through the PST/RtI framework should NOT delay special education evaluations if a specific learning disability is suspected.** If a parent or teacher requests a special education evaluation for a student due to a suspected learning disability, the request should be considered by the IEP team. It is possible and highly recommended a student participate in dyslexia services, including dyslexia-specific intervention, while a special education evaluation is being completed.

The following aspects of dyslexia should be considered:

- Despite some letter reversals or inversions, students with dyslexia DO NOT see all words or letters backwards, and dyslexia is not the result of visual difficulties.
- Dyslexia is not new and was initially identified in 1896 by Dr. W. Pringle Morgan.
- Many of the most effective dyslexia-specific interventions used today are derivatives of the multimodal intervention approach initially developed in the 1930's by Dr. Samuel Orton and Anna Gillingham and are often referred to as *Orton-Gillingham* (OG) based or multisensory interventions.
- **Dyslexia occurs on a continuum of severity.**
- Dyslexia tends to be inherited and generally "runs in families." However, it does occur in individuals who have no prior family history.
- Dyslexia is the most common cause of reading, writing, and spelling difficulties.
- Dyslexia impacts males and females and individuals with different ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds almost equally.

- Dyslexia is a lifelong, genetic-based condition and cannot be cured because it is not a disease.
- **The reading, writing, and spelling challenges that typically accompany dyslexia often can be remediated through multimodal dyslexia-specific instruction, and interventions.**
- Brain-imaging research indicates that unlike typical learners who use left-hemisphere structures for reading, individuals with dyslexia use more right-hemisphere structures for reading and its component processing.[3]
- Being "right-brain thinkers" results in difficulties in processing information needed for reading, writing, and spelling when these skills are taught in a typical manner.[3]
- Being "right-brain thinkers" also results in many advantages equipping individuals with dyslexia to be more likely to "see the big picture," to "think outside the box," to develop novel problem-solving approaches, and to have an entrepreneurial spirit.[3]
    - Individuals with dyslexia may be gifted and talented in various areas – music, arts, athletics, or intellectual pursuits.
    - Individuals with dyslexia may show special aptitude in visual-spatial thinking or three-dimensional awareness and may excel in professions requiring those abilities (design, architecture, engineering, photography).
    - Individuals with dyslexia may have strong technical and mechanical aptitude.
    - Individuals with dyslexia may be accustomed to trying hard and fighting barriers in order to achieve success.

Common Dyslexia Challenges That Impact Learning to Read, Write, and Spell [9]

Early literacy challenges – students with dyslexia may have difficulty with:

- Understanding that sounds make words.
- Rhyming.
- Identifying beginning, middle, and ending sounds in words.
- Recognizing, blending, and segmenting individual sounds within words.
- Letter recognition – capital and lowercase.
- Left to right and top to bottom directionality.
- Ability to read and write their own name.

Reading challenges – students with dyslexia may have difficulty with:

- Learning the sounds that correspond to letters and letter combinations.
- Sounding out (decoding) words.
- Differentiating between letters or words that look similar (p and q; there and three).
- Recognizing and remembering high frequency or sight words such as *said, they,* and *was.*
- Accuracy (adding or omitting words or parts of words).
- Fluency (reading with ease, speed, and expression).
- Comprehension of text.
- Maintaining place while reading.

Writing challenges – students with dyslexia may have difficulty with:

- Sequencing letters correctly within words.
- Copying with accuracy.
- Mechanics (correct use of capitalization and punctuation).
- Spelling.
- Planning and organizing ideas for writing.
- Expressing ideas in complete sentences.
- Proofreading skills.
- Legible handwriting and appropriate spacing of words.
- Staying within the margins of a page and writing on the line.
- Aligning numbers in columns when doing math problems.

(To be clear, there are other issues that may impact student's abilities to read, write, and spell. However, these "red flags" are common characteristics of dyslexia.)

Dyslexia Challenges to Look For in Specific Grades [9]

Pre-K and Kindergarten

- Problems with pronouncing words correctly.
- Delayed language and vocabulary development.
- Difficulty in reciting the alphabet and days of the week sequentially.
- Difficulty with quickly naming things (colors, shapes, familiar objects) when shown pictures of objects.
- Frustration with coloring, pasting, and cutting with scissors.
- Rhyming, speech articulation issues, remembering simple song lyrics, tying shoes.

Grades 1-4

- Slowness in learning the connection between letters and sounds.
- Letter reversals (b/d) and inversions (u/n).
- Lack of a systematic approach to sounding out words.
- Difficulty in reading words (by sight and by decoding).
- Frustration with reading tasks.
- Good comprehension of material that is read to the child as opposed to text that he/she tries to read.
- Problem recalling facts.
- Difficulty in learning math facts, especially multiplication tables.
- Problems with telling time and understanding time concepts such as before and after.
- Problems in understanding directions.

Grades 5-8

- Weak decoding skills; slow to figure out multisyllabic words.
- Poor sight word vocabulary.
- Difficulty in learning spelling strategies such as root words, affixes, spelling patterns.
- Poor oral reading; lack of fluency.
- Difficulty with word problems in math.

- Problems recalling facts.
- Good oral self-expression, but not in writing.

High School

- Poor spelling.
- Poor written composition.
- Avoidance of reading or writing assignments.
- Incorrect reading of information.
- Trouble with summarizing.
- Poor memory skills.
- Slow work speed.
- Problems with organizing work and managing assignments.
- Difficulty with performing in classes that have reading and writing demands.
- Difficulty in learning a foreign language.

Successful Outcomes for Students

By providing a range of services ranging from dyslexia-specific reading intervention, dyslexia screening, and referral as needed to related services, schools across our state will succeed in meeting the instructional needs of a significant number of students, including those whose challenges may result from dyslexia. Provision of dyslexia-specific intervention, screening, needed accommodations, assistive technology as needed and provision of classroom instructional support will be supported through ongoing and embedded professional learning. Educators who are thereby equipped to fulfill the aspirations of the Alabama Dyslexia Services Plan will reap the significant benefits of improved student outcomes. The benefits to be gained through these services will extend to all students, including those with dyslexia.

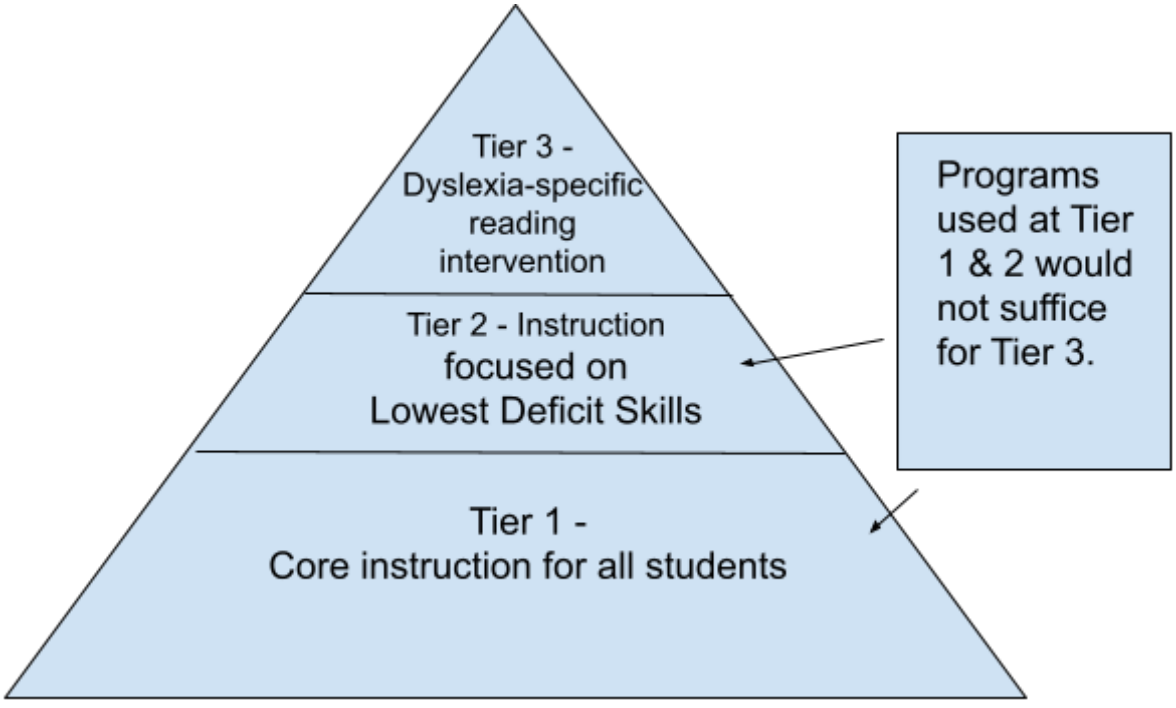
References for the Introduction and Overview

Section 3

Multi-Tiered Student Support (MTSS)

Although the Response to Instruction (RtI) model has been used in Alabama for many years, the ALSDE is moving to the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS). MTSS encompasses a range of supports to all students, regardless of their classification as general education or special education. MTSS is broader than RtI, specifically addressing social and emotional components of learning that were previously not addressed. ***This is especially important for dyslexic students since their academic difficulties may manifest in a variety of ways.*** (Gibbs, 2017- Rising to Dyslexia Challenges Through Multi-Tiered Systems of Support: A Handbook for Schools. LRP Publications).

A central component of both RtI and MTSS is tiered instruction. Tiered instruction indicates a progression of intensity that is appropriate for the needs of the individual student. The tiers are additive in nature, meaning that students receiving Tier 3 instruction will also receive Tiers 1 & 2 instruction. Materials used for tiered instruction should correspond to the level of intensity; therefore, Tier 1 instructional materials, including those used as core supplements would not suffice for Tier 3 instruction. Intervention programs should be chosen from the current list vetted and provided by the Alabama Literacy Task Force working in conjunction with the Dyslexia Advisory Council and the Alabama Reading Initiative.



Please refer to the links below for recommendations provided by the Alabama Committee on Grade Level Reading.

Alabama Action Plan for Literacy: Birth to Grade 3

Tier 1 Instruction for Literacy

Tier 2 Intervention for Literacy

Tier 3 Intervention for Literacy

> *…The goal of every school should be to provide interventions for all struggling readers that are sufficiently powerful to bring reading skills up to grade-level standards. If this is accomplished for all struggling readers, then it will automatically be accomplished for all students with dyslexia."*
>
> Dr. Joseph Torgeson
> (Florida Center for Research on Reading, 2010)

Section 4

Dyslexia-Specific Screening Process

According to the Alabama Literacy Act, students in grades K-3 in Alabama schools will be given a universal screener that has been recommended by the Alabama Literacy Task Force. This list is as follows:

Recommended by the Literacy Task Force (Effective 2023-2024)

- aimsweb Plus by Pearson Assessments
- mCLASS Alabama Edition by Amplify

The results of universal screenings mandated by the Alabama Literacy Act and conducted in schools across the state will be used to determine students' need for intervention. If the universal screener is tightly aligned to the requirements in the ALA, those results will allow educators to determine appropriate intervention. Lack of progress in the approved intervention program determines the need for an in-depth dyslexia screening. Additionally, an assessment for characteristics of dyslexia will be provided for students upon parental or teacher request.

Students who score below benchmark (based upon the publisher's guidelines) on the school's universal reading screening, thus presenting as struggling readers, will receive a Student Reading Improvement Plan as outlined in the Student Support Flow Chart. If progress monitoring of the Student Reading Improvement Plan (SRIP) indicates insufficient response to intervention, the student must be screened for characteristics of dyslexia using screening materials which are not part of the universal screening assessment and results should be reported to the Problem Solving Team.

Students **with consistent deficiencies and not making progress in dyslexia-specific intervention** should be screened for dyslexia at the following intervals:

- Kindergarten students should not be screened until 2nd semester.
- First grade students should not be screened until after the first nine weeks of school.
- Students with consistent deficiencies at any other point should be screened.

Dyslexia-specific screening for students who are in grades two and above must provide the student with an opportunity to demonstrate skill levels reflecting competence or deficits in each of the following foundational reading skills:

1. Accuracy of word reading in on-grade-level text
2. Spelling skills
3. Phonemic decoding efficiency skills (decoding nonsense words)
4. Sight word reading efficiency skills
5. Alphabet skills fluency

Dyslexia-specific screening for students who are in kindergarten or first grade must provide the student with an opportunity to demonstrate skill levels reflecting competence or deficits in each of the following foundational reading skills:

1. Letter naming skill
2. Letter sound skill
3. Phonemic awareness
4. Nonsense word fluency skill
5. Alphabet skills fluency

If any student demonstrates deficits in at least three of these five areas, they will be considered to display characteristics of dyslexia. The Problem-Solving Team will review the following:
1) characteristics of dyslexia,
2) details of the Student Reading Improvement Plan,
3) response to earlier interventions, and
4) provision of effective classroom instruction. This analysis will determine the student's intervention needs and will equip the team to intensify or change intervention, as appropriate to ensure student success.

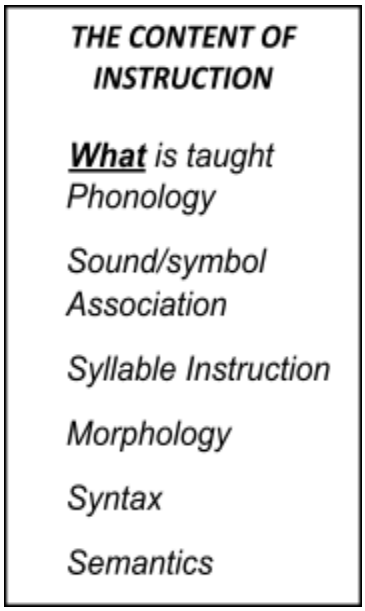
See example flowchart

Although families may seek further testing for a formal diagnosis of dyslexia, it is not needed for students to receive the benefits of a SRIP or a Dyslexia Services Plan. Likewise, the lack of a diagnosis of dyslexia does not limit services in any way.

Schools should be aware of the Child Find implications of a dyslexia diagnosis, specifically when students lack proficiency in spelling, reading, and writing. Child Find is the ongoing obligation to identify, locate, and evaluate all children suspected of disabilities who need special education and related services as a result of those disabilities. For instance, repeatedly referring a student for interventions rather than evaluating the student's need for special education or related services could be a violation of Child Find. (https://www.mdek12.org/sites/default/files/Offices/MDE/OAE/OSE/sped-powerpoints-page/dyslexia_sped_directors_mtg_11.1.19.pdf)

Section 5

Classroom Strategies



The following excerpt is reprinted with permission from the Texas Education Agency (July 2015). It is taken from *The Dyslexia Handbook* published in 2014. This excerpt is from Chapter III, Instruction for Students with Dyslexia, pages 26-29.

Critical, Evidence-Based Components of Dyslexia Instruction

- **Phonological awareness**—"Phonological awareness is the understanding of the internal sound structure of words. A phoneme is the smallest unit of sound in a given language that can be recognized as being distinct from other sounds. An important aspect of phonological awareness is the ability to segment spoken words into their component phonemes" (Birsh, 2011, p. 19).

- **Sound-symbol association**— Sound-symbol association is the knowledge of the various speech sounds in any language to the corresponding letter or letter combinations that represent those speech sounds. The mastery of sound-symbol association (alphabetic principle) is the foundation for the ability to read (decode) and spell (encode) (Birsh, 2011, p. 19). "Explicit phonics refers to an organized program in which these sound-symbol correspondences are taught systematically."
(Berninger & Wolf, 2009, p. 53)

- **Syllabication**—"A syllable is a unit of oral or written language with one vowel sound. The six basic types of syllables in the English language include the following: closed, open, vowel-consonant-e, r-controlled, vowel pair (or vowel team), and consonant-le (or final stable syllable). Rules for dividing syllables must be directly taught in relation to the word structure." (Birsh, 2011, p. 19)

- **Orthography**—Orthography is the written spelling patterns and rules in a given language. Students must be taught the regularity and irregularity of the orthographic patterns of a language in an explicit and systematic manner. The instruction should be integrated with phonology and sound-symbol knowledge.

- **Morphology**—"Morphology is the study of how a base word, prefix, root, suffix (morphemes) combine to form words. A morpheme is the smallest unit of meaning in a given language." (Birsh, 2011, p. 19)

- **Syntax**—"Syntax is the sequence and function of words in a sentence in order to convey meaning. This includes grammar and sentence variation and affects choices regarding mechanics of a given language." (Birsh, 2011, p. 19)

- **Reading comprehension**—Reading comprehension is the process of extracting and constructing meaning through the interaction of the reader with the text to be comprehended and the specific purpose for reading. The reader's skill in reading comprehension depends upon the development of accurate and fluent word recognition, oral language development (especially vocabulary and listening comprehension), background knowledge, use of appropriate strategies to enhance comprehension and repair it if it breaks down, and the reader's interest in what he or she is reading and motivation to comprehend its meaning. (Birsh, 2011, pp. 9 and 368; Snow, 2002)

- **Reading fluency**—"Reading fluency is the ability to read text with sufficient speed and accuracy to support comprehension"(Moats & Dakin, 2008, p. 52). Teachers can help promote fluency with several interventions that have proven successful in helping students with fluency (e.g., repeated readings, word lists, and choral reading of passages). (Henry, 2010, p. 104)

In addition, other areas of language processing skills, such as written expression, which require integration of skills, are often a struggle for students with dyslexia. Moats and Dakin (2008) posit the following:

> The ability to compose and transcribe conventional English with accuracy, fluency, and clarity of expression is known as basic writing skills. Writing is dependent on many language skills and processes and is often even more problematic for children than reading. Writing is a language discipline with many component skills that must be directly taught. Because writing demands using different skills at the same time, such as generating language, spelling, handwriting, and using capitalization and punctuation, it puts a significant demand on working memory and attention. Thus, a student may demonstrate mastery of these individual skills, but when asked to integrate them all at once, mastery of an individual skill, such as handwriting, often deteriorates. To write on demand, a student has to have mastered, to the point of being automatic, each skill involved (p. 55).

Delivery of Dyslexia Instruction

While it is necessary that students are provided instruction in the above content, it is also critical that the way in which the content is delivered be consistent with research-based practices. Principles of effective intervention for students with dyslexia include **all** of the following:

- **Simultaneous, multisensory (VAKT)**—"Multisensory instruction utilizes all learning pathways in the brain (visual, auditory, kinesthetic-tactile) simultaneously in order to enhance memory and learning" (Birsh, 2011, p. 19). "Children are actively engaged in learning language concepts and other information, often by using their hands, arms, mouths, eyes, and whole bodies while learning." (Moats & Dakin, 2008, p. 58)

- **Systematic and cumulative**—"Systematic and cumulative instruction requires the organization of material to follow the order of the language. The sequence must begin with the easiest concepts and progress methodically to more difficult concepts. Each step must also be based on elements previously learned. Concepts taught must be systematically reviewed to strengthen memory." (Birsh, 2011, p. 19)

- **Explicit instruction**—"Explicit instruction is explained and demonstrated by the teacher one language and print concept at a time, rather than left to discovery through incidental encounters with information. Poor readers do not learn that print represents speech simply from exposure to books or print" (Moats & Dakin, 2008, p. 58). Explicit Instruction is "an approach that involves direct instruction: The teacher demonstrates the task and provides guided practice with immediate corrective feedback before the student attempts the task independently." (Mather & Wendling, 2012, p. 326)

- **Diagnostic teaching to automaticity**—"Diagnostic teaching is knowledge of prescriptive instruction that will meet individual student needs of language and print concepts. The teaching plan is based on continual assessment of the student's retention and application of skills" (Birsh, 2011, p. 19.). "This teacher knowledge is essential for guiding the content and emphasis of instruction for the individual student" (Moats & Dakin, 2008, p. 58). "When a reading skill becomes automatic (direct access without conscious awareness), it is performed quickly in an efficient manner." (Berninger & Wolf, 2009, p. 70)

- **Synthetic instruction**—"Synthetic instruction presents the parts of any alphabetic language (morphemes) to teach how the word parts work together to form a whole (e.g., base word, derivative)." (Birsh, 2011, p. 19)

- **Analytic instruction**—"Analytic instruction presents the whole (e.g., base word, derivative) and teaches how the whole word can be broken into its component parts (e.g., base word, prefix, root, and suffix)." (Birsh, 2011, p. 19)

SECTION 6

Accommodations

*The International Dyslexia Association (*IDA) *prepared this fact sheet describing reasonable accommodations involving materials, interactive instruction, and student performance to help children with learning problems in general education and special education classrooms.*

IDA Fact Sheet on Accommodations

The IDA encourages the reproduction and distribution of this resource kit. If portions of the text are cited, appropriate reference must be made. This may not be reprinted for the purpose of resale.

40 York Road, 4th Floor • Baltimore, MD 21204
Info@interdys.org
www.interdys.org

Teaching students with dyslexia across settings is challenging. Both general education and special education teachers seek accommodations that foster the learning and management of a class of heterogeneous learners. It is important to identify accommodations that are reasonable to ask of teachers in all classroom settings. The following accommodations appear reasonable and provide a framework for helping students with learning problems achieve in general education and special education classrooms. They are organized according to accommodations involving materials, interactive instruction, and student performance.

Accommodations Involving Materials

Students spend a large portion of the school day interacting with materials. Most instructional materials give teachers few activities or directions for teaching a large class of students who learn at different rates and in various ways. This section provides material accommodations that enhance the learning of diverse students. Frequently, paraprofessionals, volunteers, and students can help develop and implement various accommodations.

Accommodations Involving Interactive Instruction

The task of gaining students' attention and engaging them for a period of time requires many teaching and managing skills. Teaching and interactions should provide successful learning experiences for each student.

Accommodations Involving Student Performance

Students vary significantly in their ability to respond in different modes. For example, students vary in their ability to give oral presentations; participate in discussions; write letters and numbers; write paragraphs; draw objects; spell; work in noisy or cluttered settings; and read, write, or speak at a fast pace. Moreover, students vary in their ability to process information presented in visual or auditory formats.

> Accommodations do not change the content of instruction, give students an unfair advantage, or change the skills or knowledge that a test measures.

Section 7

DYSLEXIA-SPECIFIC INTERVENTIONS

An approved and vetted list of dyslexia specific interventions for grades K-3 will be provided by the Alabama Literacy Act Task Force and for grades 4-12 by the Dyslexia Advisory Council. This is based upon the requirements in the Alabama Literacy Act of 2019. Each intervention program includes clear explicit guidance for small group intervention using multimodal strategies for struggling readers in phonological awareness, phonics (including decoding and encoding), sight words, vocabulary, and/or comprehension. (ALA page 14, line 8) They include explicit, direct instruction that is systematic, sequential, and cumulative in phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension based upon current research in the science of reading.

Curricula materials used in Tier 1 instruction, including supplemental core materials, do not meet the requirements for dyslexia **specific** intervention. Materials in Tier 3 should be such that they provide a different opportunity for students to gain and catch up on missed understanding of skills/content. For this reason, program materials used in Tier 1 & 2 instruction (even if on the approved list) for a student would not be appropriate for Tier 3 instruction.

Dyslexia Specific Intervention List

Grades 4-12 Intervention List

A NOTE ABOUT CONTROVERSIAL DYSLEXIA INTERVENTIONS: There are a number of interventions or therapies that would not meet the criteria included in the AAC definition of dyslexia-specific intervention. Some interventions have been described as controversial and should be avoided. Information about controversial therapies can be found at the following links:

https://eida.org/false-claims-mislead-about-dyslexia-treatment/

http://www.aao.org/clinical-statement/joint-statement-learning-disabilities-dyslexia-vis

http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/124/2/837

APPENDICES

A	**Dyslexia Screening Tools**
B	**Dyslexia Screening Flowchart**
C	**Dyslexia Screening Profile Links**
D	**Parent Resources**
E	**Other Resources**
F	**Dyslexia Advisory Council**
G	**List of Revisions to DRG**

APPENDIX A

Examples of Dyslexia Screening Tools

Please click on links below for examples of screening tools.

Examples of Phonemic Decoding Assessments

Examples of Sight Word Reading Assessments

Examples of Spelling Assessments

Examples of Passage Reading Assessments

Examples of Letter Naming Skill Assessments

Examples Letter-Sound Skill Assessments

Examples Phoneme Segmentation Skill Assessments

Examples Nonsense Word Fluency Skill Assessments

Procedure for Alphabet Skills Fluency Assessment

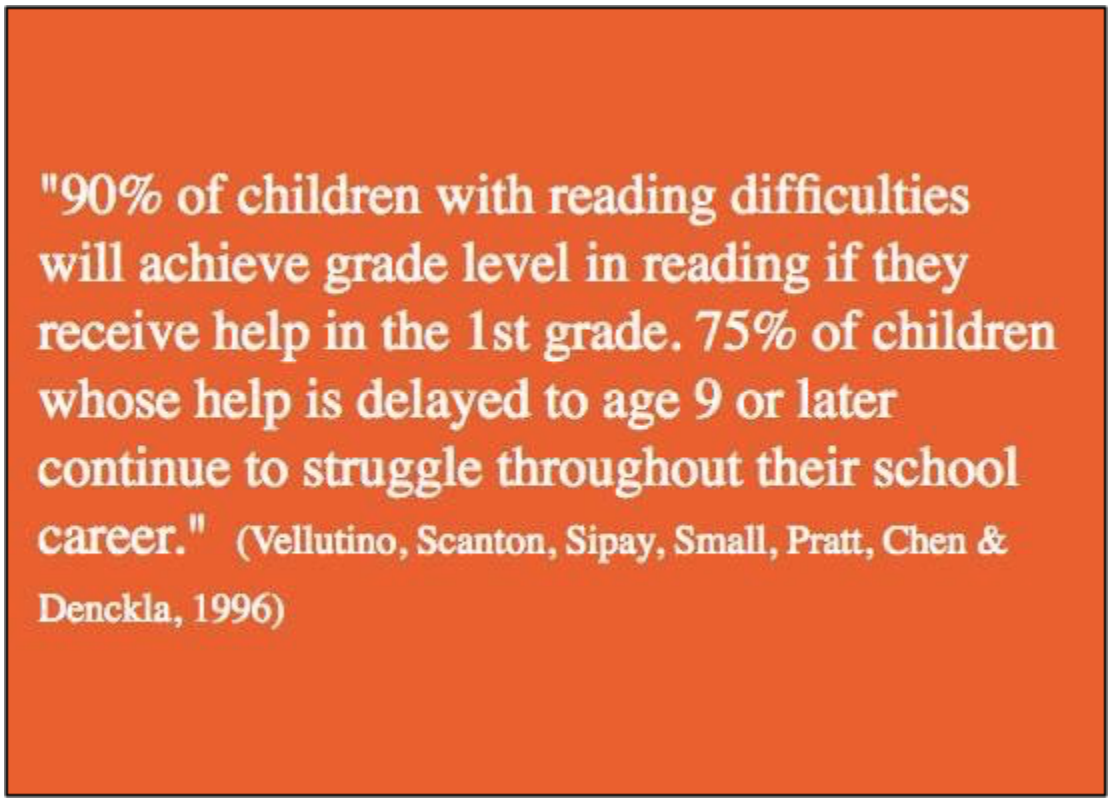
Ask the student to print the lower-case letters of the alphabet. Time the student and record the number of minutes and seconds needed to complete the task. Note any errors in which letters were incorrect or not in correct order. Students in grades 2 and above should be able to complete this task in one minute or less with no errors.

Kindergarten Alphabet Skills Fluency Screening

APPENDIX B

Screening Flow Chart

Dyslexia Screening Decision-Making Flow Chart



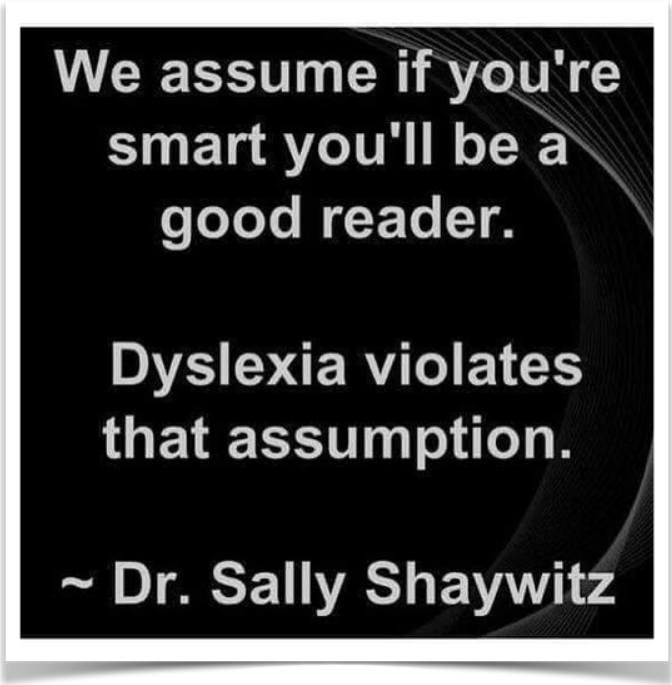
APPENDIX C

Dyslexia Screening and Needs Assessment Profiles

[Dyslexia Screening and Needs Assessment Profile Grades K-1]

[Dyslexia Screening and Needs Assessment Profile Grades 2-12]

[Dyslexia Screening and Needs Assessment Profiles with examples]



APPENDIX D

Parent Resources

Decoding Dyslexia Alabama

Parent Advocacy Resources- IDA

Appropriate Reading Instruction for a Child with Dyslexia

Dyslexia in the Classroom: What Every Teacher Should Know

IDA Dyslexia Handbook: What Every Family Should Know

Talking to your child - some questions and answers

Finding Hope After Being Identified - The Good News Is…

There are many advantages that accompany dyslexia and our world would not be as wonderful without contributions made by people who exhibited characteristics of dyslexia. Click on this **link** for just a few of these famous individuals.

Self-Esteem, Attitudes, and Stress

Multisensory Homework Help

Parent Question & Answer

APPENDIX E

Other Resources

Technology Resources

Book and Video Resources

Alabama Literacy Act

Implementation Guide

Alabama Administrative Code Dyslexia Amendments

Dyslexia Resolution

Frequently Asked Questions

Appendix F

The Alabama State Board of Education appointed the following individuals to the Alabama Dyslexia Advisory Council.

Name	Email Address	SBOE District	Role
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Hunter Oswalt	hunter.oswalt@gmail.com	District 1	CALT/Private Practitioner
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Erica Cockrell	efaust@bcbe.org	District 1	CALT in training
Christina Recor	cricketrecor@gmail.com	District 2	Parent
Corley Holt	crholt@mail.com	District 2	Parent
Katie Herston	katie.herston@chambersk12.org	District 2	CALT
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Denise Gibbs	**denisepgibbs@gmail.com**	**District 8**	**Parent/Private Practitioner**

APPENDIX G

List of Dyslexia Resource Guide Revisions

The Alabama Dyslexia Resource Guide was originally published in August 2015. This page will be updated to include all changes or revisions. The following is a list of all revisions:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/17jeUlN8B2pdEqocDi0j9RyQzszTienbSqTPUeCLAmZg/edit?usp=sharing

